

do you think of school? Are there any changes you would particularly like to make?" Both groups of students immediately leapt at the subjective assessment—I use the term advisedly—in Grades 11 and 12 and, for that matter, right through secondary school. They expressed concern because they felt they were being watched constantly and that, unless their thinking was in step with that of the teacher, they would not get good marks. They felt that the only way in which they could move up in their classes was by getting in step with the thinking of the teacher.

We do not want to breed a race of yes-men or sycophants. That is not the type of society we are trying to create. If I were to make a general remark about teachers, I would say that they are particularly good and do not introduce a situation in which students are being watched constantly and are required to get in lock step with their thinking. However, that does not take anything away from the fact that students in Queensland believe that that is the case. As long as students believe that it is the case, and no matter how many times we tell them that it is not so, we are breeding a group of people who believe that they have to be in lock step with the thinking of their superiors. They are brought up not to question any values and not to believe anything other than that achievement in society is related to a person's ability to get his thinking into step with that of his superiors. Such an environment is not a healthy one.

On top of that, I would mention a situation that is the immediate problem not of the Education Department but of the Minister for Education in that he is responsible for education in Queensland. I refer to the situation created by the A.S.A.T. test, which determines in part whether a student goes on to university and what he is allowed to do at university.

I know of two doctors who are tremendously admired for their hard work and dedication to their profession. Anyone who knows them would state that they are exceptionally talented and are the type of men whom the community wants as doctors. Both of these men obtained extremely poor marks in their secondary and university careers. However, both of them wanted to be doctors. We do not want to create in our society a situation in which people are told what they want to be. Surely we want the individual to decide the profession or job that he wants to enter. There is an old saying to the effect that it is not the size of the dog in the fight but the size of the fight in the dog that counts.

I do not claim for one moment that, instead of having subjective assessments, we should turn a somersault and revert to the former system. The comments that I have made are limited to secondary education and are not related in any way to primary education. Queensland has made marvellous changes in primary education and has taken a gigantic

step forward. For that, the Government and the Education Department are to be applauded. However, in secondary education, where we have this subjective assessment, tertiary entrance scores and A.S.A.T. tests, it is lamentable that children sit for examinations for which they cannot study—examinations that simply assess their I.Q.—and it is even more lamentable that, because of who a child's parents are and because a computer comes up with an answer on his examination results, he is told what job he should do for the rest of his days. That is a very sad reflection on our society.

Mr. MOORE (Windsor) (4.45 p.m.): In the Estimates for the Department of Education one sees a mass of figures, headings and subheadings—but it is virtually a carbon copy of the Estimates of the year before, apart from increases in amounts to keep pace with inflation, with the exception that last year's grant of \$15,000 to the trustees for Newstead House has been taken away completely this year. Over the years we are given a mass of figures on which we are supposed to debate the Estimates. On the information we are given, nobody could debate expenditure. Unless one was within the department, one could not debate the expenditure. Those within the department who know the information are duty bound to keep it within those four walls, so members of Parliament are limited to speaking broadly on the subject of education rather than on the subject of expenditure, which is what the debate is really all about.

The gross amount spent on education this year, \$472,339,493, is a sizeable amount of money. Of course, a very large part of that goes in salaries. I do not intend to make a very long speech on the subject of education. I cannot help comparing education in my day with education at the present time. It would be wrong to say that there have not been some improvements, but there is far too much experimentation—experimental schools and experimental classes. When these experiments are found to be failures, what happens to the guinea pigs who have been used? What price are they paying?

What price is paid by children whose parents are public servants and get transferred from one school to another? For a period they are at a school with one curriculum and then they go 200 miles away—or even 20 miles—to some other area where the schoolteachers have decided on some other curriculum. They are like fish out of water. By the time they have picked up the threads, their parent or guardian probably has received another transfer.

On the other hand, there are schools such as the Newmarket High School, which it was decided to use as an experimental school. The numbers went down and there was a change of principal and a change of ideas. A school of 600 or 700 students was

virtually broken into a two-school system. It was an absolute shemozzle. This is the type of thing that is happening with education.

I am not wholly and solely a three Rs man—reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic. However, when the end product of a school education cannot even add up a grocery order, there is something wrong with the system. I have spoken to schoolteachers who have said, "Of course, you're wrong, you know. It is an electronic age. We are not teaching them to do mental arithmetic any more. It is just a case of knowing how to obtain the information, how to press the button, how to use the calculator or how to use the computer." What about the calibre of teachers? There are members of the teaching profession today who cannot spell and who have to ask the children how to spell a certain word. In many primary and secondary schools students are not taught tables and spelling. They are regarded as being unimportant. It grieves me that they are not taught.

The system of allowing each school to work out its own curriculum has to be stopped. Even though the schools might be allowed some latitude, a basic curriculum must be set for all schools so that when a parent changes his place of abode his children do not find too much difficulty in picking up the threads at a different school.

A problem also exists where each of four or five primary schools feeding a secondary school uses a different curriculum. The principal and the teachers from the high school might establish some rapport with those in the primary schools in an attempt to get as many students from those primary schools as they can and not have them passing their school and going to another one. In their inquiries they find that one school is teaching in one way and that another school is teaching in another way; that they are using completely different curriculums. How then can the high school, unless it implements a re-education course, put those children through their secondary studies? It cannot.

Generally speaking, children read fairly well. However, all children are promoted from grade to grade regardless of how dumb they are. They automatically go right through primary school and head for secondary school. I have seen some children who should be attending an opportunity school, but they get promoted just the same. The high school has to put up with them. The fault lies with the primary school.

I have some grave misgivings about the present system under which we are supposed to be educating children for life and not for work. I will educate my daughter for life and I expect the school to educate her for work. I think that the majority of families like to think that they influence their children to observe their standards and not those of the teachers.

Another problem in schools is the transfer system. I realise that a principal or teacher

who has served in the country for some time likes to obtain a city posting. But the system is wrong when the numbers attending the school decrease and, as a result, the school is given a lower classification. Because of that, a teacher aide, a librarian or somebody else disappears. Then the numbers are further decreased because parents hear that the school does not have the full facilities. The process is like dry rot. The schools find difficulty in overcoming that problem in getting the numbers to increase again.

If teachers are transferred in the middle of a term—and on occasions it has happened to two or three teachers at the one school—the children are not being given a fair go. Recently, at the Newmarket High School, so many principals and acting principals were transferred that it just was not funny. I hope that the present principal will remain there for some time.

The Newmarket High School now has an enrolment of 450 or 470, whereas previously it was about 1,000-odd. Children are travelling past it to The Gap or to Kelvin Grove, and there has to be a reason for this, although I do not know what it is. Perhaps the reason was that it became an experimental school. Parents were not going to have their children attend an experimental school. I do not think it is very experimental at the moment, and I think we should thank Mr. Gilmour because to some extent he has stopped the rot. But how do we then re-establish the school's reputation so that people will feel that when their children attend that school they will come away with an education.

I have already mentioned spelling and tables, and I think this is something upon which real emphasis has to be placed. I still know the things I learnt by rote, but I have teachers telling me, "Oh, you didn't really know it." But I still know, "Nominative I, possessive my or mine, objective me." I learnt that when I went to school. I say to these teachers, "I learnt nominative we; possessive our, ours; objective us; plural nominative they; possessive thy or thine; objective them." The teachers say, "Oh, you are only doing it parrot fashion." I say to them, "But I also learnt parts of the verb to be; am, is, are, was, were, wert, be, being, been, have, has, had, saw, seen, could, would, do, did, done, does." Perhaps they should be saying, "Oh, he learnt that, and he still remembers it."

I am not 21 any more, but the things I learnt by rote I still know. I am told, "Oh, but you didn't know anything about mathematics." Didn't I? I speak to children in grade 9 and say, "What is $(a+b)^2$?" One does not receive the answer, " $a^2+2ab+b^2$ " off the top of their head like one would in my day. They start to pull their shoes off, hiccup and wonder what algebra is all about. There is something wrong with the system when people decry the things one learnt by rote. I do not suggest that everything can be learnt by rote, but what one learns stands